D-1452

G. 55M-7-38

File No.

SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE.

Section 1, Special Branch

REPORT

Date March 10, 1938

Subject: Suicide of A.I. Scherbakoff, Soviet Citizen.

Made by: D.S.I. Prokofiev. Forwarded by: C. Glanfield D.C.

The inquest held in the Public Mortuary, Miaochow Road, on 7-3-38 regarding the death of Mr. A.I. Scherbakoff, Soviet citizen, was attended by the undersigned. Nothing was revealed during the proceedings to which a political significance could be attached.

The Russian pro-Soviet newspaper "Novosti Dnia" in the issue dated 7-3-38 mentioned home-sickness as the likely reason of Scherbakoff's suicide, but after the inquest abandoned this theory.

Afanasy Ivanovich Scherbakoff resided in Shanghai since 1920 or 1921. It is reported that he obtained a Soviet passport in 1924, when the Soviet Consulate-General was established in this city. He was known to this office as an associate of Soviet employees and agents and at one time was suspected of being a secret Soviet agent.

A. Prokofiev
D. S. I.

FILE

D.C. 11/3.

D. C. (Special Branch)

SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE
11 MAR 1938
SPECIAL BRANCH

D.C. (Shanghai Branch)

1452
26 3 38

"B"

Misc. 90/38 Sinza
25th March, 38.

3

Suicide of U.S.S.R. Citizen, Mr. A. Scherbakoff, in Foreign Y.M.C.A. Bubbling Well Road

Sir,

On 18/3/38, one cheque book, one note book, one wrist watch, $2.40 and .55 Yen, the property of deceased, were handed over at this station to Mr. L. Fergel, of the U.S.S.R. Consulate. The remainder of deceased's property in Room 530, Foreign Y.M.C.A. Bubbling Well Road was taken over by Mr. Fergel on 21/3/38.

Yours obediently,

D. S. 249.

Sen. Det. 1/c.

SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE
28 MAR 1938
SPECIAL BRANCH

Kne

D.C. Special Branch.

"B"
Sinza
8th March, 38.

Misc. 90/38

2

Suicide of U.S.S.R. Citizen Mr. A. Scherbakoff.

Sir,

An inquest regarding the death of Mr. A. Scherbakoff was held in the Public Mortuary, Kiaochow Road, on the morning of 7/3/38, Procurator Soong Kung San presiding; Mr. M.A. Constantinov U.S.S.R. Vice Consul, attended, and Dyd Prokofiev was also present.

At the conclusion of the proceedings the following verdict was handed down:-

"Death due to gunshot wound. Body to be removed by Mr. M.A. Constantinov. Pistol to be handed to police for disposal."

The procurator did not order the sealed letters and parcels left by deceased to be opened, giving it as his opinion that this and disposal of deceased's other property should be dealt with by the U.S.S.R. Consulate.

After the inquest, Mr. Constantinov opened the letter addressed to the U.S.S.R. Consulate. Same merely contained a request for the disposal of his body and the liquidation of his business, etc. no reason for the suicide being given. A cheque for $1,000.00, the keys of deceased's office at 238 Nanking Road, and deceased's passport, were enclosed.

It would appear that deceased contemplated taking

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9/3

his life for some time, as it has now been learned that during the past week he was studying a book on anatomy evidently to gain knowledge of vital shots of the body, while he made enquiries regarding the cost of a funeral from Mr. Vasian, who told him that $1,000.00 would be required. It has also been learned that deceased applied some time ago to the U.S.S.R. Consulate for a visa to visit Russia, but was refused. Apart from this, nothing has been found to indicate that the deceased took his life for political reasons.

The body of deceased has been removed to the premises of the International Funeral Directors, Kiaochow Road, and the funeral arrangements are being made by the U.S.S.R. Consulate.

Deceased's effects in Room 580, Y.M.C.A. Building, will be taken over by Mr. Constantinov, U.S.S.R. Vice Consul, in the course of the next few days.

Pistol and ammunition sent to A.I.S. P.M.7/8/38.

Yours obediently,

D. S. 249

Sen. Det. 1/9. 38

D.C. Special Branch.

"B"

Misc. 99/38. Sinza
March 6th. 38.

1.

Suicide of U.S.S.R. Citizen, Mr. A. Scherbakoff, in Foreign Y.M.C.A. Bubbling Well Road.

Sir,

At 10.10a.m. on 6-3-38, a telephone-message was received at this Station from the Foreign Y.M.C.A. Bubbling Well Road, to the effect that a foreign resident, Mr. A. Scherbakoff, had committed suicide in Room 530 of the above institution.

S.I. Duncan, C.D.C. 131 and the undersigned proceeded to the scene, and were shown to Room 530 by Mr. W.G. Schmidt, Assistant Secretary.

On a bed in the room, the dead body of a male foreigner, dressed in pyjamas, was lying face upwards in a pool of congealed blood, which had exuded from a gunshot wound at the top of the skull. Both hands were lying across the abdomen and were covered by a mirror which had been detached from a chest of drawers in the room. In the right hand, the deceased grasped a "Webley & Scott .32 automatic pistol, maker's No. 98075, (unlicensed) in new condition." There was one round in the breech and six in the magazine. One spent cartridge case, and one bullet, badly distorted through having struck the wall above the head of the deceased, were found lying among the bedclothes.

In a wardrobe in the room, the following articles were found.

SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE
7 MAR 1938
SPECIAL BRANCH

(1) One box containing 49 rounds of .32 "Colt" ammunition.
(2) One box containing 25 rounds of .32 ammunition. Belgian make.
(3) One pistol holster.
(4) Four empty packets which had contained Bayer's "Veronal" tablets, and a receipt for same, price $3.80, issued by the Anglo-Chinese Dispensary, Foochow Road, to Mr. Scherbakoff, 207 Hardoon Building, dated 1st March, 1938.
(5) One Y.M.C.A. teacup, with a white powdery substance believed to be veronal, adhering to the sides.

Found lying on the top of a chest of drawers in the room was an unsealed envelope bearing the inscription in English:- "To all my friends. Last few words". The envelope contained a sheet of business writing paper with the heading "A. Scherbakoff, Woollen Piece Goods, 235 Nanking Road, Room 207", on which the following message was written.

"To all my friends last few words.
I am taking my life because I noticed that I am on the decline and because I don't want to be a witness of my own slow fading and destruction.
In other words, discontinuance of my being I consider as avoidance of unpleasant process.
Anyhow I thank my fate for joys and sorrows.
Good luck everybody.
(Signed) A. Scherbakoff".

Also found on the top of the chest of drawers were the following:-

(1) One sealed letter addressed to "Mr. L. Rookoff, 62 Nanking Road, Local".
(2) One sealed letter and parcel addressed to Mr. S.G. Vanian, Room 500, Hardoon Building.
(3) One sealed letter and parcel addressed to "General Consulate U.S.S.R. in Shanghai, Temporary Office, 64 Route Groussy".
(4) One sealed letter and parcel addressed to "Wang Ting Wang, 36 Seymour Road, Local".

(5) One book entitled "I photograph Russia" containing a note "This book belongs to the resident of Room 430".

In addition to the above, a sealed letter addressed to Mr. W.E. Hines, Business Secretary of the Foreign Y.M.C.A., left on the chest of drawers, was removed before the arrival of Police by Mr. Schmidt and handed to Mr. Hines.

From enquiries made, it was ascertained that the deceased was a U.S.S.R. citizen named A. Scherbakoff, age about 48, woollen piece goods merchant with business premises at Room 207, Nos. 233 Nanking Road. Since February 1936 he has resided in Room 530 of the Foreign Y.M.C.A. Bubbling Well Road. He was last seen alive at about 9.30p.m. on 5-3-38, by a room boy named Lee Tu Kwan (李杜官), who took him a cup of tea to his room. At 9.50a.m. on 6-3-38, a room boy named Ling Kwaung Kwei (林廣貴) went to the room to call deceased, and receiving no answer, opened the locked door with his key. He observed the unnatural appearance of deceased, and immediately reported to Mr. Schmidt, who proceeded to the room and made an examination. As reported above, Mr. Schmidt removed the letter addressed to Mr. Hines, and the latter reported the matter to this Station by telephone.

From the evidence available, it would appear that the deceased first consumed the contents of the vermeil packet

mixed with liquid in the teacup, then lay down in bed and shot himself with the pistol, placing the muzzle of the weapon in his mouth. He apparently used the mirror to assist him in this action. The exact time at which he committed suicide has not been established as no person in the building could remember hearing the sound of a shot.

Mr. S.G. Vasian, who resides in Room 529 of the Y.M.C.A. and who is a friend of the deceased, was interviewed. He stated that he has known the deceased for the past fifteen years, and formerly lived together with him at No. 17 Rue Paul Henry, French Concession. As far as he knew, the deceased came to Shanghai about 1921, and was previously a partner in the business of Mr. L. Kosloff, 61 Nanking Road, but left there and started his own business about three years ago. For the past week the deceased complained of a severe cold, but was not confined to his room. The last occasion on which he was seen by Mr. Vasian was about 7p.m. on 5-3-38, when they met in the corridor outside deceased's room. The deceased then complained that he did not feel well, but gave no indication that he intended to take his life. Mr. Vasian was unable to advance any reason for the deceased wishing to end his life, as he believed him to be in comfortable circumstances and without any worries.

In the letter written to Mr. Hines, the deceased stated

that he had enclosed in his letter to the U.S.S.R. Consulate, a cheque on the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank, No. H124317 for $1,000.00, for the purpose of having his body cremated, and also requested them to dispose of his goods and liquidate his business at 233 Nanking Road. Enclosed in Mr. Hines's letter were the undermentioned cheques and money with the following requests:-

(1) One cheque No. 124319 for $150.00, for deceased's office boy, Hung Ting Waung, 26 Seymour Road.
(2) One cheque No. 124320 for $50.00 and $70.00 in notes. $40.00 for Chinese servants and $60.00 for Russian watchmen in the Y.M.C.A. Building.

The letter concluded with an apology for the trouble he was causing, and asked Mr. Hines to accept his (deceased's) seal as a gift.

Mr. Kosloff, 61 Nanking Road, could not be located on 6-3-38. Deceased's office boy, Hung Ting Waung was located in his home at No. 26, Lane 180 Seymour Road, but he was unable to supply any useful information.

The body of deceased was removed by S.F.B. ambulance to the General Hospital, where the following certificate was issued:-

"This is to certify that I have examined a male Russian and found that he was dead on arrival at the hospital.

(Signed) G. Chambers,
Resident Medical Supt.".

Dr. Chambers gave it as his opinion that death had occurred about five hours previous to his receiving the body, which would place the time before 5.30a.m. on 6-3-38.

The body was removed to the Public Mortuary, Miaochow Road, where an inquest will be held on the morning of 7-3-38. All witnesses have been warned to attend. The U.S.S.R. Consulate was informed and a representative will attend the inquest.

D.S. Pitts, Special Branch, was informed, and arrangements were made for a member of above branch to be present at the inquest when the sealed letters will be opened, as the suicide of deceased may have some political significance.

D.S.I. Robertson will attend inquest.

An inventory of deceased's effects in Room 530, Y.M.C.A. building, (attached) was taken by the undersigned, and the room door sealed in the presence of Mr. Schmidt, Assistant Secretary, pending the result of the inquest.

D.S.I. Golochkoff, Bubbling Well Station was informed and he attended this Station.

D.C., D.D.C. "B" Division informed.

Copy to Special Branch.

Yours obediently,

Sen. Det. i/c.

D.S. 249.

List of Effects of Mr. A. Scherbakoff (Deceased) in Room 530 Y.M.C.A. Building, Bubbling Well Road.

1. One "Marvin" gold wrist watch,
2. One large size "Kodak" camera,
3. One set chess-men and board,
4. 27 books (various),
5. One ornament in form of seal,
6. One wardrobe trunk containing six suits and one raincoat,
7. One empty leather suitcase,
8. One leather suitcase containing two dress jackets and vests, and two Summer jackets,
9. One suitcase containing one set lady's pyjimas, 2 dress shirts, 5 tennis shirts, 1 scarf, 1 box photographs, 1 woollen vest, 1 pillow, 1 pair riding breeches.
10. In wardrobe:- 1 dressing gown, 1 bathrobe, 1 kimono, 1 overcoat, 3 jackets, 3 vests, 5 pairs pants, 1 Summer suit, 1 shirt, 44 ties, 5 hats, 1 scarf, 23 gramophone records, 1 pair riding boots, 1 pair black shoes, 2 pairs Summer shoes, 1 pair tennis shoes.
11. In chest of drawer:- 10 shirts, 8 Summer shirts, 1 photo album, 6 collars, 4 watch straps, 2 pairs cuffs, 2 belts, 4 handkerchiefs, 22 pairs socks, 5 stiff collars, 1 pair suspenders, 1 pair braces, 3 towels, 3 pillow cases, 3 pairs pyjimas, 9 pieces underwear, 1 pullover, 2 pairs riding breeches, 4 swimming suits, 2 pairs khaki pants, 2 pairs shorts, 1 pair stockings, 1 singlet, 1 pair glovers, 10 pillow cases, 1 table cover, 2 kimono, 1 bathrobe, 1 leather strap, 2 pairs spectacles in cases, 1 pair eyeglasses in case, 1 fountain pen, 2 $1.00 notes, 1 $10 piece, 2 $5 pieces, 1 50 sen piece, 1 5 sen piece, 1 box studs, 1 seal.
12. In table drawer:- Personal papers, 1 cheque book, 1 notebook, 1 Red Cross badge, and 1 bunch keys.

Popular Soviet Citizen Here Is Found Dead

A. I. Scherbakoff Shot Through Head; Left Suicide Notes

Believed to have shot himself through the head with an automatic revolver, Alexander I. Scherbakoff, 47, Soviet Russian, yesterday morning was found dead in his room at the Foreign Y.M.C.A., 150 Bubbling Well Road, shortly after 10 o'clock.

An ambulance rushed to the scene immediately after the discovery which caused an uproar in the public building, brought the man to the General Hospital dead. Scherbakoff was not a member of any volunteer body, and the weapon with which he is thought to have ended his life was a private revolver. The bullet entered the head, passing through the brain and causing instantaneous death.

Body At Morgue

The body is now at the Kiaochow Road mortuary, awaiting an inquest to be held this morning.

The deceased left several letters to close friends indicating suicide. These letters were in the hands of the S. M. Police, unopened, last night, and their contents will be divulged at this morning's inquest.

Scherbakoff has been in Shanghai for some time, and for more than two years has been residing in the Foreign Y.M.C.A. He was the proprietor of a firm bearing his name with offices in the Hardoon Building, 233 Nanking Road, dealing in woolen piece goods. It has been ascertained that he has no relatives in Shanghai, his nearest kin at present residing in Moscow.

While the reason for his alleged suicide is expected to be fully explained in the letters he has left behind for friends, it was not known up to a late hour last night what prompted the shooting. Acquaintances discredited reports of financial stress, and it has been ascertained that during his two-year residence at the Foreign "Y," he was never once behind in his rent.

During his stay in Shanghai, the deceased has developed many friendships both in and outside the Foreign Y.M.C.A. He was considered one of the exemplary and most popular residents of the institution.

RUSSIAN FOUND DEAD AT FOREIGN "Y"

Shot Through Head With Small Pistol; Found Dead By Room Boy

Mr. A. I. Scherbakoff, 48-year-old citizen of the U.S.S.R., was found dead in his room on the fifth floor of the Foreign Y.M.C.A. on Bubbling Well Road by the room boy yesterday morning. Upon the resident manager being called, the latter summoned an ambulance, which immediately conveyed the Russian to the General Hospital, but he was found to be beyond medical aid upon arrival. There was a bullet wound in his head.

Detectives of the Sinza Road Police Station were yesterday investigating circumstances and reasons leading to the elderly Russian's tragic death. Several letters were left in his room by the deceased. These will be opened at the inquest to be held this morning at the Kiaochow Road Mortuary.

The man was last seen alive at about nine o'clock on Saturday night, and he must have died between that hour and ten o'clock yesterday morning, when the boy went into his room and found him lying on his bed.

The deceased was a piece-goods merchant and had resided for about a year at the Foreign Y.M.C.A. He had no relatives in Shanghai.

D 145

Inquest Finds Soviet Citizen Took Own Life

Scherbakoff Letters State Desire To Be Cremated

A verdict of suicide was returned at the inquest of Alexander I. Scherbakoff, 47-year-old Soviet citizen who shot himself through the head with an automatic revolver in his room at the Foreign Y.M.C.A., 150 Bubbling Well Road, Sunday morning. The inquest was held at the Kiaochow Road mortuary yesterday morning, when letters written by the deceased to friends were opened.

The letters showed that in taking his own life, the late Mr. Scherbakoff did not act upon impulse, as its contents reveal premeditation. In them, he expressed a desire to be cremated, and left instructions for the disposal of his property in Shanghai.

Mr. Scherbakoff was found dead in his room by the boy at 9:50 o'clock Sunday morning, shot through the head. A fired revolver lay by his side. His death, believed to have occurred not more than two hours before, is said to have been instaneous, the bullet passing through the brain.

Scherbakoff has been a resident of Shanghai for several years, putting up at the Foreign Y.M.C.A. for more than two years during which he was looked upon as one of the exemplary and most popular residents of the institution. He was the proprietor of a woollen piece goods firm bearing his name with offices in the Hardoon Building, 233 Nanking Road. He has no relatives in Shanghai, his nearest kin residing in Moscow.

In his letters, the deceased gave no concrete reason for his drastic action, but inferred that he was tired of life in general. If the deceased had any financial worries, these are not known to his close friends.

Form No. 2
G. 21,500-1-31

SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE.

REPORT

SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE
C. & S. D. REGD.
No. Section 2A
File No. S.B.D. 1456
Station
Date 21. 8. 31.

Date August 20, 1931.

Subject (in full) Arrival of A.I.Scherbakoff and Mr. and Mrs F.I.Zaviantzeff, Soviet Citizens.

Made by D.S.Prokofiev *Forwarded by* D.S. Lee. 21.8.31.

The undermentioned Soviet citizens arrived in Shanghai from Tientsin and Dairen respectively on August 18, 1931 by the s.s. Choshun Maru:-

A.I. Scherbakoff	Suspected Soviet secret agent. At present employed as manager with Kosloff's, 107 Nanking Road. Resides at Windsor House, 941 Bubbling Well Road.
F.I. Zaviantseff	Clerk in the employ of the local office of the Chinese Eastern Railway. Resides at No.455 Rue Lafayette, Apt.1.
Mrs. Zaviantzeff	Wife of above.

* See i.o. 7071

A. Prokofiev.
D. S.

Officer i/c Special Branch.

File
21:8:31.

Form No. 2
21,400-1-31

SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE.

File No.

C. & I. Section 2. Station
No. S. B. D. 1452. 31,
Date July 28, 31 19
Date 29 - 7 - 31

REPORT

Subject (in full) Departure of A.I. Scherbakoff, Suspected Soviet Agent.

Made by G. S. Prokofiev. *Forwarded by* D.B. Lu 31

The undermentioned Soviet citizen left Shanghai for Tsingtao on July 24, 1931 by the s.s. Hoten Maru.

A. I. Scherbakoff — Suspected Soviet secret agent, employed as Manager at L. Kosloff's No. 107 Nanking Road.

While in Shanghai he resides at the Windsor House No. 941 Bubbling Well Road.

G. Prokofiev.
D. S.

Officer i/c Special Branch.

File
29:7:31.

File No.

SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE.

H.Q. C.I.D. S.B. Branch. Station,

S.B.D. 1452.

REPORT

Date December 16, 19 30

Date 16 - 12 - 30.

Subject (in full) Mr A. I. Scherbanoff (K ?)

Made by D.S. Suhoff Forwarded by C.D.I. Hunter

Mr. A. I. Scherbanoff --- Suspected Soviet Agent, the manager of Kazloff's Millinery Store in Nanking Road, removed on the December 1, 1930, from 37 Carter Road to Mayfair Mansion, 151a Bubbling Well Road.

16/12/30.

Suhoff.
D. S.

Office i/c S.B.
Information.

S2. Please verify and report.
noted.
Reg. Please file.
Wdo 18/12/30. 16:12:

File No.

SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE.

REPORT

SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE
Special Branch, Central Station,
No. S. B. D. 1452.
Date August 25. 1930.
Date 26. 8. 30.

Subject (in full) A. Scherbakoff.

Made by D.S. Faddeeff. Forwarded by W.H. Duncan D.S.I.

Sir,

The undermentioned Soviet citizen arrived in Shanghai from Tsingtao on August 22, 1930 by the S.S. "Hoten Maru."

A. Scherbakoff- Soviet Secret Agent.
Manager of "L. Kozloff"
Millinery Shop, No. 107
Nanking Road.
He resides at No. 37
Carter Road.

G. Faddeeff
D. S.

D. C.
(C. & S. Branches)

Copy sent to
H.B.M.C.G. 26.8.
[illegible]

File No.

SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE

SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE
C. & S. B. REGISTRY
No. S. B. D.1052.
Date 18-7-30.

REPORT

Special Branch No. 5 Station,
Date July 17, 1930.

Subject (in full) Afanasy Ivanovitch Scherbakoff.

Made by D.S. Tcheremshansky. Forwarded by Wheelock DSI

Information has been received that Afanasy Ivanovitch Scherbakoff, Manager of "L. Kozloff," No. 107 Nanking Road, Importer of French goods, silk and woollen materials and novelties and Exporter of Chinese antiques and curios, is a Secret Soviet Agent. He is registered as a Soviet citizen and is in possession of Soviet passport No. 184. He resides at No. 37 Carter Road.

Photograph attached.

G. Tcheremshansky
D. S.

D. C.
(C. & S. Branches)

Reg. Copies White russian authorities also original to D.C. (Br. and Sp. Br. 5) for information.

Copy sent to:-
H.B.M. Con.-Gen.
18/7.

18/7.

18:7:30.